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The Principles of Greek Art. By PROFESSOR PERCY GARDNER, University of Oxford. New York: Macmillan Co., 1914. Pp. xvii + 352. \$2.25.

Just as the poetry and prose of the Greeks is expressed in a particular language, the words and the grammar of which must be studied by those who would understand the literature, so works of Greek painting and sculpture also are composed in what may be called a particular artistic language. The words of that language are the strokes of the brush and the chisel; but these are put together in order to embody Greek ideals in ways which are distinctive and not like those adopted by any other people; certainly unlike those of modern art. The object of the present work is to set forth, as simply and directly as possible, what these ways are; to define, in fact, the principles of Greek art, and so render more intelligible the works of painting and sculpture which have come down to us from Hellenic antiquity.

Although the problem before us is one which can be solved by a close and long-continued examination of the monuments of Greek art, yet it is at bottom psychological. We have to determine the laws according to which the mind, the taste, the hand, of the artist worked. We are speaking of a generalized or ideal process. It will not, of course, be supposed that a sculptor or painter, before he set about his work, consciously or deliberately thought out the lines on which he should proceed. He went by the traditions of the craft, the customs of a school. But his unconscious process can be brought out in regular and methodical form; and this is what I propose to do.

With these words Professor Gardner introduces a volume of absorbing interest to those who concern themselves with either the history or the theory of art. The book is more than a revision of the author's *Grammar of Greek Art*, which appeared in 1905; it presents a complete working-over of the earlier volume with extensive additions, including two new chapters.

The difficulty of the task which Mr. Gardner set before himself is obvious. Yet in the face of the decline of the study of Greek in schools and colleges one may well doubt whether there ever was a time when Greek art made a wider appeal than it does today, or when there was greater need of a work that should set forth clearly the means by which it expressed itself. All about us, in every conceivable relation, we see decorative designs and architectural forms which trace their origin to the ancient Greeks; it is no exaggeration to say that the study of the art of no other people will yield so much to the understanding and appreciation of the aesthetic elements in our modern culture.

Two characteristics of the volume are noteworthy: the breadth of treatment and the pertinence of the illustrations, of which there are more than a hundred; these are interpreted by full descriptions in the text, and hackneyed subjects are so far as possible avoided. Freshness and vigor are characteristic also of the subject-matter, which abounds in suggestive analogies outside the Greek field; thus we read (p. 94):

Among ourselves, the fashionable women who resort to the fortune-tellers of Regent Street certainly cannot look down upon those who in Greece resorted to the

oracles of Zeus and Apollo in honest search for the better line of conduct. The individualists who feel no sense of duty to the state and society would be infinitely improved if they could find in the beauty of a statue an expression of the divinity of the common life of the city or state. . . . The influence of many schools of modern art tells not merely towards artistic chaos but towards ethical degradation.

Consistently with the point of view revealed in his previous writings the author treats Greek art, not as an isolated development, but in immediate relation with that kindred manifestation of the Hellenic genius, the Greek literature. Quotations from the Greek are, however, given in translation, and technical details are not obtruded. The author's handling is moreover less subjective than might have been anticipated in the case of a theme which tempts to generalization. There are few points in regard to which scholars will disagree with him.

The pages of the *School Review* can hardly provide space for detailed criticism, or for more than a suggestion of the varied contents of the volume. After an introductory chapter we find a brief summary of the observations of the Greek and Roman writers upon the fine arts, particularly sculpture and painting; and two chapters deal with the basal conceptions of Greek architecture as expressed in the temple, the house, and the tomb. There follow illuminating discussions of the formation of artistic types, the types of the gods, and the law of frontality in Greek art. Four chapters are devoted to sculpture, including a special treatment of the Greek dress shown in sculpture; four to Greek painting, chiefly, of course, vase-painting; three to literature and painting, including an extended analysis of the judgment of Paris as treated in literature and in art; and two to art in relation to history, with a special treatment of coins. The last of the twenty-one chapters contains a thoughtful and suggestive essay upon naturalism and idealism in Greek art.

The departments of art and of the classics in the universities are frequently asked to recommend books on art for purchase by public and school libraries. Surely no list of such works now will fail to contain the title of this book by Professor Gardner, who in it sums up the conclusions reached as a result of many years of fruitful study. Those who work through the volume will, I think, find themselves in sympathy with the author's closing remarks, which may well be quoted here:

The Greeks, by the universal confession of artists and students of art, bore a message, not only to their own time and country, but to all men in all ages. Their art was classical, that is, conformed to what is permanent and above criticism in human life. It is for this reason that it must hold an important place in education, the main object of which is, or should be, to enable the learner to discern between good and evil. Thus all ages must owe a debt to Greece for the simple beauty, the sanity, the healthfulness of the ideal element which she introduced into art, making it for the first time in history a true exponent of the human spirit.

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